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BELLEVUE ARTS MUSEUM

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## Bellevue Arts Museum announces BAM Biennial award winner

**BELLEVUE, WA** – Bellevue Arts Museum just launched the first edition of its new signature exhibition series, *BAM Biennial*. The Museum is excited to announce that ceramic artist Dirk Staschke is the recipient of one of two prestigious awards given in conjunction with this juried exhibition. The *John & Joyce Price Award of Excellence*, selected by the curatorial staff of the Museum, comes with a \$5,000 cash prize and the opportunity of a future solo exhibition at BAM.

“The *BAM Biennial* celebrates the extraordinary work of artists and craftsmen working and living in the Northwest,” says Stefano Catalani, Director of Curatorial Affairs/Artistic Director of Bellevue Arts Museum. “By establishing this important exhibition series, we are filling a unique niche that allows us to capture the very moment in which craft is gaining a tremendous amount of momentum.”

The first edition of the *BAM Biennial* focuses on one of the oldest and most versatile media known to man: clay. Dirk Staschke is one of over 30 artists participating in the *BAM Biennial 2010: Clay Throwdown!* which will be on view at BAM through January 16, 2011. He lives and works in Vancouver, British Columbia, and has maintained an ongoing studio practice and extensive exhibition record for the last 12 years. He has taught at many notable universities, including Emily Carr, Alfred University and New York University. Staschke’s work resides in the permanent collections of several museums, including the Renwick Gallery of the Smithsonian American Art Museum in Washington, DC; Museum of Fine Arts in Houston, TX; and Icheon Museum, World Ceramic Center in Gwangong, South Korea.

“Dirk Staschke's "My Beautiful Nothing" is as striking as it is perturbing,” Catalani notes. “Masterly crafted and visually arresting, the sculpture commands the space with its cascading presence. In its fleshy appearance the piece is a contemporary memento constructed around the polarities of bounty and decay, fullness and emptiness, movement and stillness. Reaching out to a scale bigger and more complex than previous works, Staschke pushed himself to create something unique in conversation with the grand architecture of the museum.”

The second award in conjunction with the BAM Biennial is the *Samuel & Patricia Smith People's Choice Award*. Between now and October 27<sup>th</sup>, Museum visitors have an opportunity to cast a vote for their favorite artist. The award, which is also recognized with a \$5,000 cash prize, will be announced at the October 28<sup>th</sup> Members’ Reception.

### About *BAM Biennial*

*BAM Biennial* is a juried exhibition that will occur every two years starting in 2010. It brings attention and exposure to the work of contemporary artists and craftsmen in the Pacific Northwest. For each edition, the Museum designates a new focus, exploring a specific medium, technique, process or theme in art, craft and design, the Museum’s artistic focal point.

Submissions to the 2010 edition were reviewed by a panel of four jurors comprised of Bif Brigman, collector (Seattle, WA); Stefano Catalani, Director of Curatorial Affairs/Artistic Director, Bellevue Arts Museum (Bellevue,

WA); Akio Takamori, artist and professor of ceramics, University of Washington (Seattle, WA) and Namita Wiggers, Curator, Museum of Contemporary Craft (Portland, OR).

*BAM Biennial 2010: Clay Throwdown!* is organized by **Bellevue Arts Museum**, curated by Stefano Catalani and is made possible by **The Boeing Company, John & Joyce Price** and **Samuel & Patricia Smith**.

### **About Bellevue Arts Museum**

**Bellevue Arts Museum** is the Pacific Northwest's center for the exploration of art, craft, and design. **BAM** celebrates regional, national and international artists working in a broad range of craft media, including ceramics, fiber, metal, wood and glass. The Museum also offers a unique array of free or low-cost educational and community programs such as artist demonstrations, lectures and workshops as well as a variety of engaging and fun hands-on kids activities. The **Bellevue Arts Museum artsfair**, the largest and most prestigious arts event in the Pacific Northwest attracting an average of 350,000 visitors, is held annually in July. **BAM** is located in the heart of downtown Bellevue, provides free parking and is wheelchair accessible.